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Your essential daily news | MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 2016

High -15°C/Low -21°C Sunny and windy

John Rathwell, Tracy Geunard and their dog Rain with a newly purchased Westfalia van in Gatineau Park. CONTRIBUTED

SEARCHING FOR SERO

(as in serotonin)

Gatineau couple planning two-year road trip to promote active living and mental health

metroNEWS

Illegal snowbanks an 'epidemic': City

SAFETY

Pedestrians forced to walk on the road in some areas

Emma Jackson
Metro | Ottawa

An "epidemic" of rogue snowbanks is blocking city plow operators from doing their job, according to roads manager Luc Gagné.

Some plow operators are dumping snow onto city sidewalks when they clear private parking lots and laneways, Gagné said, which is slowing down city sidewalk machines which have to carve through unexpected snowbanks or abandon the cause altogether.

On Huron Avenue in Wellington West, for example, a snowbank completely blocked the sidewalk behind Wild Willy's floral shop, which shares a rear parking lot with Fab Baby Gear. Sidewalk plows opted to go around, leaving pedestrians no choice but to walk on the road.

"You can't get through it. How do you get through that big mound?" Gagné said.

This "massive problem" is largely contained in the core, Gagné said.

While the city's Use and Care of Roads bylaw prohibits snow dumping, there's little way to enforce the rules.

"We have to have a witness to corroborate the dump happened," Gagné said.

His team is talking to businesses and private plow owners to remind them of the bylaw.

The public works department got the brunt of residents' anger after as many as 25 centimetres fell over 14 hours on Dec. 29.

There were about nine centimetres on the ground before residential streets saw any relief. The city's snow clearing standards say residential streets should be cleared at seven centimetres.

The city is currently reviewing those standards, which auditor general Ken Hughes said in November go above and beyond provincial minimums.

Gagné said he has not been told to lower clearing standards ahead of the review, which is due this spring.

"We're staying with the standards that we have," he said.

metro NEWS
Your essential daily news

Judge rules Bill Cosby's wife, Camille, must testify in civil case against him.

5 WAYS TO ENJOY THE SNOW IN OTTAWA

Love it or hate it, winter has finally arrived in the capital. You've no doubt already had your fill of shovelling, scraping, salting and trudging, but don't go into hibernation just yet. Here are five things to do when you tire of binge-watching Netflix.

Emma Jackson
Metro | Ottawa

1 Snow sculptures

Do you want to build a snowman? Do you want to go and play? With that unforgettable song now in your head, get outside and make yourself a friendly snowperson. Gave all your carrots to Santa's reindeer? Put your leftover Christmas candy to use: create a sultry, come-hither look with Ferrero Rocher eyes or perhaps an I'm-a-little-tipsy-and-I-love-you effect with a crooked candy cane smile. World Snowman Day is Jan. 18, so now's your chance to get creative.

2 Tobogganing

The city of Ottawa maintains 59 sledding hills across the capital, including the ever-popular mound at Mooney's Bay. At the moment they're all closed, but that may change as snowfall continues to blanket the city. The NCC also offers hills at Bruce Pit, Conroy Pit and Green's Creek, with the latter two lit in the evenings for fun after sundown.

3 Cross-country skiing

If you can't face Camp Fortune's bunny hill, maybe a turn on a pair of Nordic skis is more up your alley. There are more than 150 kilometres of marked ski trails in the greenbelt — 40 of them groomed — and lots of opportunity to ski on all those multi-use pathways the city doesn't plow. Beginners should head to Mooney's Bay, where rentals and lessons abound and the trail is invitingly easy.

4 Skating

We won't be doing any triple axels on the Rideau Canal any time soon, but that doesn't mean you can't skate outside. Refrigerated rinks at Lansdowne Park and City Hall are open every day from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. and another at Ben Franklin Place in Nepean is open 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. In theory, there are also more than 250 outdoor community rinks around town, but most of them are still closed thanks to the balmy weather we enjoyed until Christmas.

5 Snow biking

Can't wait until spring to take your bike for a spin? New this winter, Gatineau Park is allowing "fat bikes" to ride on 10 kilometres of its snowshoe trails when there's more than five centimetres of snow on the ground. If you've got a $7 day pass and tires thicker than 9.4 centimetres, head to trails 64, 65, 66 and 67 for a winter thrill on rough terrain. Just make sure you yield to snowshoers — after all, they were there first.

‘There are very, very few people … who can take moonshots’

BRUCE FIRESTONE

Co-founder of Sens talks of effort to bring NHL to Ottawa

David Sali
Ottawa Business Journal

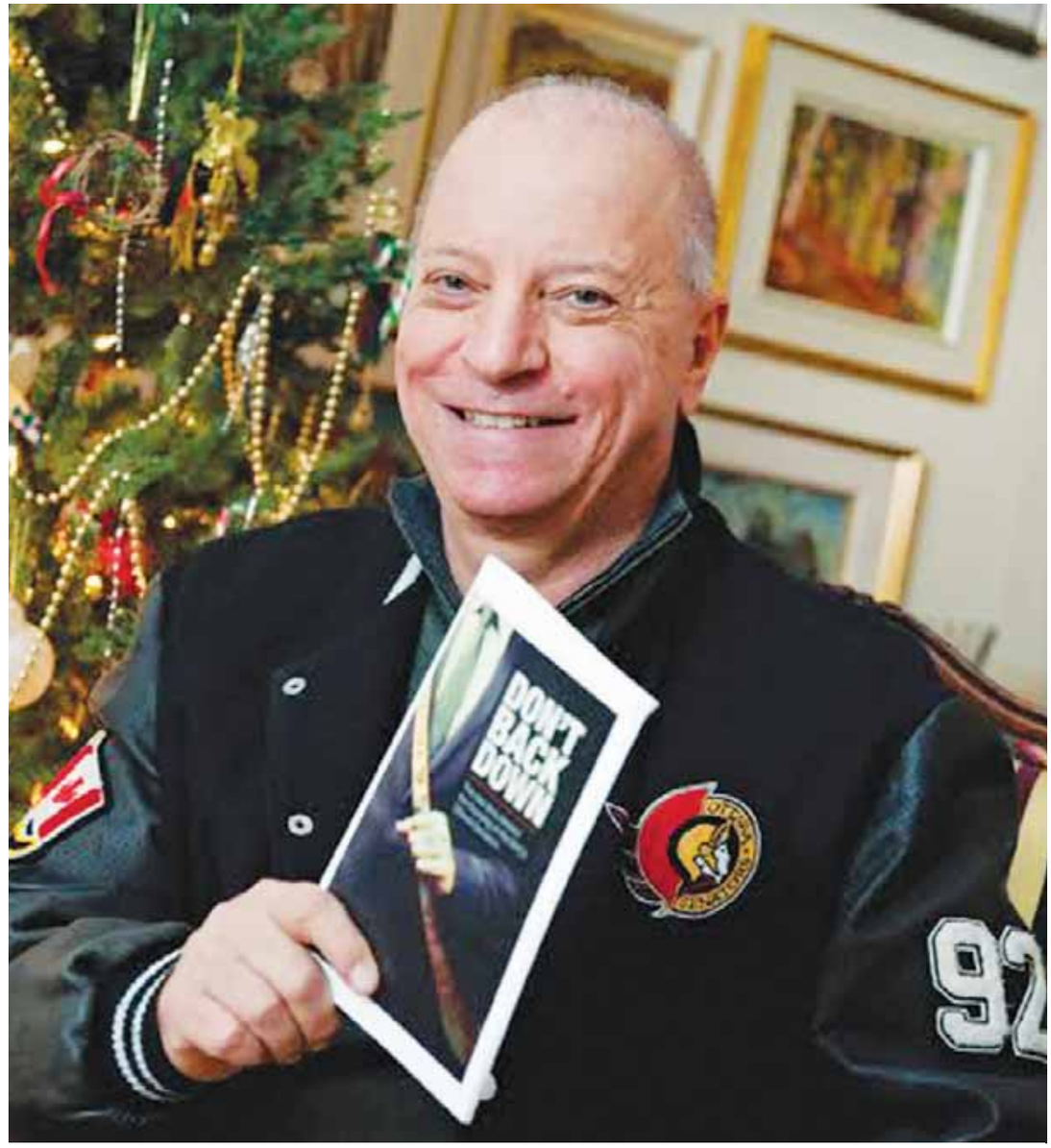
On Dec. 6, 1990, a group of young Ottawa entrepreneurs accomplished what most pundits thought was impossible — they convinced the NHL to grant an expansion franchise to the nation’s capital.

That intrepid trio was led by a 39-year-old real estate developer named Bruce Firestone, whose goals included delivering a Stanley Cup to Ottawa and turning 600 acres of land next to the team’s future west-end arena into a thriving neighbourhood with a hotel, office space, shops, parks and homes.

In *Don’t Back Down: the Real Story behind the Founding of the NHL’s Ottawa Senators*, Firestone shares his tale of the league’s return to the city it left in 1934. He recently spoke with OBJ print editor David Sali about the book, and what follows is an abridged transcript of that conversation.

OBJ: What prompted you to write this book now?

BF: In some ways, I probably should have waited another 25 years, but one of the reasons why I did it now is I just turned 64 and frankly, waiting another 25 years would just be too long — and maybe after 50 years, nobody will care. And for that matter, I might not be here to write it. I did promise (Senators president) Cyril Leeder, who’s a history buff himself, that I would write the book someday, and it just seemed that the day had come.



Bruce Firestone says it just seemed the day had come to write his book, *Don’t Back Down: the Real Story behind the Founding of the NHL’s Ottawa Senators.* PHOTO COURTESY MARK HOLLERON

OBJ: You had some suggestions for how Ottawa can achieve a lasting legacy with its Canada 150 celebrations in 2017. What are your thoughts on the progress of the Ottawa 2017 plans?

BF: I said back in 2013, “Look, we’ve got the longest skateway, let’s build the longest boardwalk in the world and connect the wonderful institutions and rivers and canals that we have.” It would be a lasting project for 150 years. If you read between the lines of everything that’s been said up until today by the (Ottawa 2017) committee, they’re really saying, “Well, gee, wouldn’t it be great if somebody had an event in a park and we all lit candles” or something. I mean, there’s nothing going on as far as I can see that’s going to be special about 2017. Canada, I think, has lost some of that energy and vision that we had when (former National Capital Commission chairman) Douglas Fullerton said, ‘Hey, we’re going to create the longest skateway in the world,’ when we did things like Expo 67 in Montreal, where we thought as Canadians, ‘We can do something that’s world-class.’

OBJ: Walk us through the thought process that led you to bring the NHL back to Ottawa.

BF: When I first started building office buildings (with real estate firm Terrace Investments) in the early ’80s, I think we were getting $18 or $19 a square foot for suburban offices, which was a pretty good number. Then it sort of tracked downwards, and I think by 1987 or ’88, it had dropped down to $6. So I said to Cyril (Leeder, who was then president of Terrace), “We just can’t build any more office buildings. The writing’s on the wall.” Office space is just a tough, tough game. You’re competing against pension funds and REITs. We were facing that back in ’87. That’s why I asked myself, “What do we do next? Let’s look at what Toronto’s doing. Maybe we can predict the future by looking there.”

I think we had a good plan. Cyril Leeder is a sensible individual. (Former Terrace vice-president and Senators co-founder) Randy Sexton is as well. Everybody thought it was a doable plan because we had done that sort of thing before. But we just didn’t anticipate a change in political direction when David Peterson, the Liberal former premier of Ontario, called an election 2-1/2 years early. He was riding well over 50 per cent in the polls and he lost.

OBJ: Do you think things would have turned out differently had the Liberals stayed in power?

BF: I think so. I think yours truly would still be with the Sens and we’d be having quite a different conversation today. That was a pivotal point for me.

OBJ: Bob Rae’s NDP government ended up fighting your arena plan at the Ontario Municipal Board. Was there ever a time when you thought, this whole thing is going to go up in smoke?

BF: No. I never felt that way. I never doubted we would win that (OMB hearing). The Ontario Municipal Board is about land use, it’s not about one backing one political party or another. I also knew that it would be the end of me as the owner of the team at one point because we took an $80-million writedown. We built the (Highway 417) interchange and we had to pay for it, and you can’t finance that. And we took a $50-million writedown on the value of our property. I knew at that point I wouldn’t be the owner for much longer, but we would get hockey in Ottawa.

OBJ: If you had to do it all over again, would you still bring the Senators back?

BF: No, I would not. That was a one-time deal. I had some fun. There were 20 major things that had to happen to make the Senators a permanent fixture and if each one of them is a 50-50 shot, that’s 0.5 to the power of 20, which turns out to be a one-in-a-million shot. As an entrepreneur, you don’t want to take too many one-in-a-million shots in your career. You could live a million years and only one of them would be successful. That’s not gonna work. When I coach young people, I’m not telling them to take moonshots. There are very, very few people on this planet who can take moonshots. There are seven billion people on the planet, and there’s really only one Elon Musk.

For the full Q&A, visit metronews.ca

The province is sticking to its ban on selling e-cigarettes and flavoured tobacco to minors under 19, starting New Year's Day. DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Ontario set for change in 2016

LEGISLATION

From lighting up to keeping the lights on

• Hydro costs

Just as the Christmas bills roll in, Ontarians are getting another jolt, as the provincial government has scrapped a 10 per cent rebate on electricity costs.

There will also be help for low-income households needing assistance on hydro costs, as the Ontario Clean Energy Benefit, which saved consumers an average of $17 monthly, comes to an end.

"It's always bad timing," said Progressive Conservative MPP and energy critic John Yakabuski of the increased cost for most ratepayers. That cost will be offset slightly by the end of a smaller charge put in place to reduce the debt of the former Ontario Hydro.

• Vaping

Smokers of e-cigarettes are getting a break as the province delays a ban on vaping in public places where smoking has been outlawed for years.

Vapers were supposed to face the same restrictions as traditional puffers starting Jan. 1, but that fell apart when the Liberal government retreated from an initiative to let people smoke medical marijuana anywhere they want.

Premier Kathleen Wynne says that proposal has gone back to the drawing board so officials can devise a comprehensive plan for vapers, whether they prefer tobacco or pot.

Until then, however, employers and business owners have the legal right to prohibit medical-marijuana users from vaporizing on their premises.

The new policy is expected in a few weeks, but in the meantime, the province is sticking to its ban on selling e-cigarettes and flavoured tobacco to minors under 19. Fines for selling to youth are also being increased.

In addition, no smoking will be allowed anywhere on the grounds of hospitals and psychiatric facilities.

• Crossings

At crosswalks and school crossings, motorists and cyclists will now have to come to a full stop until pedestrians finish crossing the road. Under previous regulations, it was all right to move forward if pedestrians had crossed half the roadway.

Pedestrians are now required to not enter a crosswalk if an approaching vehicle is so close it can't stop. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Better care for whales, workers, firefighters

• MPP expenses

Members of the legislature must post their expenses online for taxpayers to track. Staff for cabinet ministers, parliamentary assistants and opposition leaders must also post expenses.

• Marine mammals

Tougher standards of care take effect for nutrition, reproduction, light and noise exposure, water quality, enclosures and access to qualified veterinary care.

• Winter tires

Insurance companies must provide a discount for drivers who buy and install tires to improve traction and safety until spring comes.

• Injured workers

Workers who receive partial disability benefits from the Workplace Safety Insurance Board will see them rise 0.5 per cent on the way to being fully indexed to inflation in 2018.

• Unpaid fines

The fee for unpaid Provincial Offences Act fines doubles to $40, encouraging people to pay promptly. The money will go to municipalities.

• Firefighters

Lung cancer is added to the list of diseases presumed to be related to their work, making it easier for them to qualify for benefits. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

GLEE IN THE GLEBE SNOW BETTER WAY TO ENJOY THE WINTER The cold weather wasn't bothering six-year-old Ian as he rocketed down the toboggan hill at Brown's Inlet in the Glebe on Sunday. Several families made good use of the hill Sunday afternoon even as temperatures began to plummet toward the expected overnight low of –20 C. EMMA JACKSON/METRO

Police looking into two suspicious fires

INVESTIGATIONS

Arson unit believes both blazes were set on purpose

Haley Ritchie
Metro | Ottawa

Police said Sunday that they're continuing to investigate two fires that took place over the weekend.

Ottawa Fire Service said they were called to 320 Wiggins Pvt. at 10 p.m. Saturday evening after smoke set off fire alarms in the hallway of the third floor of the building.

Sergeant David Christie said the Ottawa police's arson unit investigated the fire and ruled out non-arson sources.

"We eliminated other possible causes and, therefore, believe it to be a deliberately set fire," said Christie. "Apparently, this is one of several fires that have been set in the building in the past few weeks."

Fire Services received a separate call hours later around 3 a.m. Sunday for a garage fire at 1550 Michael St.

The call to 911 reported flames and smoke coming from Johnny's Auto Sales, a car dealership close to the St. Laurent Centre. Ottawa Fire Services said the fire was quickly put out.

In the investigation that followed Christie said the Ottawa Police arson unit found evidence the fire was deliberately set in two different locations on the property. No one was injured.

> **"We eliminated other possible causes and therefore believe it to be a deliberately set fire.**
> Sgt. David Christie

Video surveillance from the shop showed two people approaching the property, They are still analyzing the footage.

Members of the public with information on either fire can call the Ottawa Police arson unit at 613-236-1222 ext. 3770. Anonymous tips can be submitted by calling Crime Stoppers at 613-233-8477(TIPS), toll-free at 1-800-222-8477 or by downloading the Ottawa Police app.

IN BRIEF

Frostbite warning issued

The mild winter is over — Ottawa Public Health issued its first frostbite warning of the year on Sunday afternoon.

Evening temperatures of -27 C with the windchill are expected, according to Environment Canada, as arctic air moves into the region.

Chilly temperatures are expected to continue on Monday, with a high of -15 C and wind chill of -29 C. Warmer temperatures will return on Tuesday.

HALEY RITCHIE/METRO

SAFETY

Jail entrance needs traffic lights: Naqvi

Emma Jackson
Metro | Ottawa

Ottawa-Centre MPP Yasir Naqvi wants the city to install a traffic light at the entrance of the Innes Road jail.

Naqvi, who is Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, wrote to Innes Coun. Jody Mitic arguing that visitors and staff to the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre must cross "several lanes of traffic" on the busy road to come and go, posing "serious safety concerns."

There was a collision there on Christmas Eve as a staff member left the jail. No one was seriously hurt, but if lights had been installed it may not have happened at all, Naqvi suggested.

He offered to work with Mitic and Mayor Jim Watson to find a "speedy solution" to the problem.

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- **5 KM** January 7th
- **10 KM** January 11th

Grant Crossing
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- **For Women Only** January 8th
- **10 KM** January 8th
- **Marathon** January 28th

160 Slater Street
(613) 233-5165
- **Learn to Run** January 4th
- **For Women Only** January 8th
- **5 KM** January 4th
- **10 KM** January 7th
- **Marathon** January 21st

Orleans Town Centre
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- **Learn to Run** January 9th
- **For Women Only** January 7th
- **5 KM** January 4th
- **10 KM** January 8th
- **Marathon** January 28th

Westboro
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- **Learn to Run** January 4th
- **For Women Only** January 7th
- **5 KM** January 4th
- **10 KM** January 8th
- **Marathon** January 28th

Road trip to promote mental health

AWARENESS

Gatineau pair inspired after heartbreaking family losses

Haley Ritchie
Metro | Ottawa

John Rathwell skis in Kelowna, B.C. in February. He and his partner are crowdfunding for their awareness campaign, Searching for Sero. CONTRIBUTED

Gatineau couple Tracy Guenard and John Rathwell have always been lovers of the outdoors — but it was only after losing two close relatives to suicide that they realized what their adventurous pursuits really meant to them.

Rathwell's father died in 2014 and Guenard lost her aunt just a few months later.

"Some mornings it was really hard to get up and get motivated while I was dealing with that loss," said Rathwell.

"During that whole time of us going through that trauma and mourning of the loss, we spent a lot of time biking, skiing and outdoors. You just get on your bike and go and you can get a couple hours of nothing going through your mind. You feel better when you get back," he said.

Guenard started researching why being outdoors and active made such a difference in the grieving process. She found science backed up their instincts: getting outdoors was good for the body and the mind.

Both creative people — Guenard is a writer and Rathwell a professional photographer — the two wanted to channel the experience into a project that would promote awareness of mental health.

"We were wrapped around the question of how do you make a photo project about the negatives of suicide," said Rathwell. "But we're both positive people, so it didn't really fit."

Instead, the two came up with Searching for Sero — which is short for serotonin, the chemical released in the brain that contributes to happiness.

With help from a crowdfunding campaign and sponsorship, the two will embark on a photo-essay project across North America in spring 2016.

The road trip will last two years as they travel in a restored Volkswagen camper van with their pup, RainDog.

Along the way Guenard and Rathwell plan to connect with people who have used nature and sport to deal with grief and aid mental health. They'll document their stories in pictures and words online at searchingforsaro.com.

> **If you're having a bad day ... going skiing or even just a walk and enjoying the outdoors always makes you feel better.** Tracy Guenard

The trip is a leap of faith — the journey will be intense, they're still working on arranging visas and Guenard will leave behind a steady government job in the capital.

But the message behind the project is to make time for adventure and play, even if it's on a smaller scale than the Searching for Sero road trip.

"It's related to John's and my loss, but before we had those events happen to us we were already active and using the outdoors to let go of steam," said Guenard.

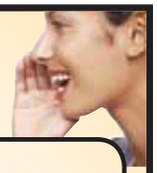
"If you're having a bad day, you're tired with work or family, going skiing or even just a walk and enjoying the outdoors always makes you feel better."

They have already started documenting stories in Ottawa, while the trip's itinerary will take them from America's deep south to Canada's northern territories.

"It's been busy, but it's been really interesting," said Guenard.

"We've received a lot of positive messages from people who have already been inspired by what we're doing."

FRENCH, ENGLISH as a SECOND LANGUAGE



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January 12 to April 9, 2016
Evenings: 6 pm to 9 pm (6 Levels)
NEW! Saturdays: 9 am to noon (2 Levels)

FULL TIME
4 weeks (60 hours in class and 60 hours online)
FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
January 11 to February 5, 2016
Levels 1, 3 and 5: 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm
Levels 2, 4 and 6: 9 am to noon
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Tracy Guenard, pictured here, and John Rathwell say their active lifestyle helped them deal with the trauma of losing loved ones to suicide. CONTRIBUTED

Concern over vital roads

INFRASTRUCTURE

First Nations voice concern about impact of climate change

Wonky weather conditions are prompting aboriginal leaders to raise concerns about the impact of climate change on winter roads, which serve as lifelines for food, fuel and other necessities in several northern communities.

Isadore Day, the Ontario regional chief for the Assembly of First Nations, said the reliability of the northern winter road network is in jeopardy in his province.

"The winter roads have essentially become a way of life for the communities and now they can't rely on those winter roads," Day said, noting the network is used to offset the cost to bring essential goods to fly-in reserves by air.

The problem exemplifies why there was outcry from First Nations during the recent COP21 climate change summit in Paris, Day said. He said if people want access into the north, the only viable way now is to have a proper road network.

Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day is calling for a proper road network into the north. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

NDP indigenous affairs critic Charlie Angus, who represents a northern Ontario riding that includes a number of First Nations communities, said money needs to be invested in sustainable infrastructure.

There has been a long-standing push for permanent roads but climate change has made the issue much more pressing, he noted. "This is the front line and this is where the action needs to be taking place now."

There is "every evidence" Canada's Aboriginal Peoples are indeed on the front lines of climate change, Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett said in an interview with The Canadian Press.

> **There will be no road if we don't have an opportunity to speak for ourselves on the issue of climate change.**
>
> Isadore Day, the Ontario regional chief for the Assembly of First Nations

"I think it is very worrying and I think that as we look not only to Ontario but to Manitoba, the proposals for the eastern road there, it is something that we are looking at and knowing that we've got to build the kind of resilient infrastructure that will deal with the changing climate."

The federal Liberal government is open to examining the impacts of the issue to allow for a long-term strategy to be developed, Bennett added. THE CANADIAN PRESS

POLITICS

Liberal MP enters wellness program

Seamus O'Regan THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Newly elected Liberal MP and former broadcast journalist Seamus O'Regan says he has entered a wellness program to adopt "an alcohol-free lifestyle."

O'Regan, who hosted CTV's Canada AM for nearly a decade, announced from his Twitter account on Sunday that he had checked into the program over the holiday break.

"I've decided after consultation with family that I can be most effective as a Member of Parliament by adopting an alcohol free lifestyle," O'Regan tweeted. He added he will return to his duties as a MP for St. John's South-Mount Pearl before Parliament resumes later this month. THE CANADIAN PRESS

TECHNOLOGY

Tablets keep refugees connected

Sanam Islam
Metro | Toronto

When it comes to helping others around the world, most people open up their wallets.

But a non-profit organization based in Toronto called The Rumie Initiative is offering a way to help vulnerable children simply by donating your time.

Rumie provides free digital educational content to underprivileged children in 11 countries through pre-loaded, solar-powered tablets.

In October, after facing a shortage of content for its new Syria campaign, the non-profit opened up an online cloud platform that allows anyone to submit high-quality educational content that can be used by the millions of Syrian refugees living in camps.

Syrian refugees are resuming their education with the help of Rumie's solar-powered tablets. CONTRIBUTED

The information is then loaded on Rumie tablets and distributed to those in need.

"The fact that we're able to say you can give your money, but you can also give your time, is something that's kind of novel," said Rumie founder Tariq Fancy. "I think it's exciting, and volunteering online will only increase in the next several years."

Fancy, 37, gave up a lucrative career as an investment banker on Wall Street to start Rumie two years ago. In addition to putting his savings into the initiative, his degree in international development also came in handy when developing a strategy.

"Underprivileged children are underperforming because there are barriers to education," Fancy said. "By using tablets, we're providing education in way that's cheaper, faster and more efficient."

It also appears to be more effective.

"We've heard from our partners that kids are far more engaged than with paper alternatives. They're excited to use technology they've often never seen," Fancy says.

Each tablet costs $50 to produce, and, to date, Rumie has distributed thousands of them all over the world, Fancy said. He says he hopes to expand the program to more places, such as Jordan and Turkey, in the near future.

Tariq Fancy CONTRIBUTED

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Armed protesters call out for militias to join them

Clampdowns set back EU ideals. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EUROPE

Idea of no borders crumbles

Since it opened in 2000, the Oresund bridge between Sweden and Denmark has been a towering symbol of European integration and hassle-free travel across borders.

On Monday, new travel restrictions imposed by Sweden to stem a record flow of migrants are transforming the bridge into a striking example of how national boundaries are re-emerging. A year of clampdowns on migration and terrorism has all but killed the idea of a borderless Europe where you could drive or train-hop from Spain to Norway without showing your passport.

"We're turning back the clock," said Andreas Onnerfors, an associate professor in intellectual history. "We're going back to a time when the bridge didn't exist," he said, referring to new ID checkpoints.

The move is meant to stop undocumented migrants from reaching Sweden, which reversed its open-door policy after receiving more than 160,000 asylum-seekers last year, mainly from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.

It follows the reintroduction of border checks in Germany, Austria, France, Belgium and other countries in what's supposed to be a passport-free travel zone of 26 nations. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

OREGON

Standoff is over local control of public land

The remote high desert of eastern Oregon became the latest flashpoint for anti-government sentiment as armed protesters occupied a national wildlife refuge to object to a prison sentence for local ranchers for burning federal land.

Ammon Bundy — the son of Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy, who was involved in a 2014 standoff with the government over grazing rights — was among the people at the headquarters of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. It was unclear how many people were taking part in the protests.

Ammon Bundy posted a video on his Facebook page asking for militia members to come help him. He said "this is not a time to stand down. It's a time to stand up and come to Harney County," where Burns is located.

Bundy and other militia members came to Burns last month, a small town 450 kilometres southeast of Portland. They were upset over the looming prison sentences for local ranchers Dwight and Steven Hammond. They went to the wildlife refuge Saturday following a rally to support the ranchers.

Dwight Hammond, 73, and Steven Hammond, 46, said they lit the fires on federal land in 2001 and 2006 to reduce the growth of invasive plants and protect their property from wildfires. The two were convicted of the arsons three years ago and served time — the father three months, the son one year. But a federal judge ruled in October that their terms were too short under U.S. minimum-sentencing law and ordered them back to prison for about four years each.

Protesters march Saturday in support of an Oregon ranching family facing jail for arson. Family members were convicted three years ago and served time. But a judge ruled their terms were too short under federal law and ordered them back to prison for about four years each. LES ZAITZ/THE OREGONIAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The decision generated controversy and is part of a decades-long dispute between some Westerners and the federal government over the use of public lands. Critics of the push for more local control have said the federal government should administer the public lands for the widest possible uses, including environmental and recreation.

In an interview posted on Facebook, Bundy said he and others are occupying a building at the refuge because "the people have been abused long enough." He said the group planned to stay indefinitely.

Dwight Hammond has said he and his son plan to report to prison Monday as ordered.

Harney County Sheriff Dave Ward said the armed protesters came under false pretenses. "These men came to Harney County claiming to be part of militia groups supporting local ranchers, when in reality these men had alternative motives to attempt to overthrow the county and federal government in hopes to spark a movement across the United States," he said in a statement. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. POLITICS

Obama considers gun measures

Back at the White House after a two-week Hawaiian vacation, U.S. President Barack Obama says he is energized for his final year in office and ready to tackle unfinished business, turning immediate attention to the issue of gun violence.

Obama scheduled a meeting Monday with Attorney General Loretta Lynch to discuss a three-month review of what steps he could take to help reduce gun violence. The president is expected to use executive action to strengthen background checks required for gun purchases.

Republicans strongly oppose any moves Obama may make, and legal fights seem likely over what critics would view as infringing on their constitutional rights to bear arms. But Obama is committed to an aggressive agenda in 2016 even as public attention shifts to the presidential election.

Barack Obama GETTY IMAGES

While in Hawaii, Obama worked on his final State of the Union address, scheduled for Jan. 12. The speech will give the president another chance to try to reassure the public about his national security stewardship after the attacks in Paris and San Bernardino, California.

Republicans have outlined a competing agenda for January, saying they will spend the first days of 2016 taking another crack at eliminating keys parts of the president's health insurance law and ending federal funding for women's health care provider Planned Parenthood. The legislation is unlikely to become law, but it is popular with the Republican base in an election year.

The debate about what Obama may do on gun violence already has spilled over into the presidential campaign. Hillary Clinton has called for more aggressive executive actions on guns, and rival Bernie Sanders said he would support Obama's expected move. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iranian demonstrators chant in front of the Saudi Embassy in Tehran on Sunday during a protest denouncing the execution of Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr. VAHID SALEMI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Shiite cleric's death spurs diplomatic feud

MIDDLE EAST

Saudi Arabia, Iran cut ties over incident

Saudi Arabia announced Sunday it was severing diplomatic relations with Shiite powerhouse Iran amid escalating tensions over the Sunni kingdom's execution of a prominent Shiite cleric.

The move came hours after protesters stormed and set fire to the Saudi Embassy in Tehran and followed harsh criticism by Iran's top leader of the Saudis' execution of Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr.

Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir said Iranian diplomatic personnel had 48 hours to leave his country and all Saudi diplomatic personnel in Iran had been called home.

The mass execution of al-Nimr and 46 others — the largest carried out by Saudi Arabia in three and a half decades — laid bare the sectarian divisions gripping the region as demonstrators took to the streets from Bahrain to Pakistan in protest.

It also illustrated the kingdom's new aggressiveness under King Salman. During his reign, Saudi Arabia has led a coalition fighting Shiite rebels in Yemen and staunchly opposed regional Shiite power Iran, even as Tehran struck a nuclear deal with world powers.

Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, warned Saudi Arabia on Sunday of "divine revenge" over al-Nimr's death, while Riyadh accused Tehran of supporting "terrorism" in a war of words that threatened to escalate.

Al-Nimr was a central figure in Arab Spring-inspired protests by Saudi Arabia's Shiite minority until his arrest in 2012. He was convicted of terrorism charges but denied advocating violence.

On Saturday, Saudi Arabia put al-Nimr and three other Shiite dissidents to death, along with a number of al-Qaida militants. Al-Nimr's execution drew protests from Shiites around the world, who backed his call for reform and political freedom for their sect.

While the split between Sunnis and Shiites dates back to the early days of Islam, those divisions have only grown as they intertwine with regional politics, with both Iran and Saudi Arabia vying to be the Mideast's top power.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

REACTION

Tehran protest gets violent

In Tehran, a protest outside the Saudi Embassy grew violent as protesters threw gasoline bombs at the embassy, setting part of the building ablaze, according to Gen. Hossein Sajedinia.

Forty people were arrested and investigators were pursuing other suspects. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani condemned Saudi Arabia's execution of al-Nimr, but branded those who attacked the Saudi Embassy as "extremists."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Five killed in ISIL video accused of spying for U.K.

A video circulated Sunday purported to show the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant group killing five men accused of spying for Britain in Syria. The high-quality footage shows five men "confessing" to filming and photographing sites in exchange for money within Raqqa, the capital of the Islamic State group's self-declared caliphate.

It then cuts to the men kneeling in orange jumpsuits in the desert, where they are shot in the head by masked men. It could not be independently verified. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Air force base attacked

Indian troops were still battling at least two gunmen Sunday night at Pathankot air force base near the border with Pakistan, more than a day and a half after the compound came under attack. The attack started before dawn Saturday and is seen as an attempt to undo recent improvements in the relationship between archrivals India and Pakistan. It comes a week after Narendra Modi became the first Indian prime minister in 12 years to visit Pakistan.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MEXICO

Mayor murdered after her first day

Three people, including a minor, were being held Sunday in the slaying of a newly inaugurated mayor in a gang-troubled central Mexican city.

Morelos Gov. Graco Ramirez ordered flags on state buildings flown at half-mast and called for three days of mourning following the murder of Temixco Mayor Gisela Mota.

He blamed organized crime for killing the 33-year-old Mota, a former federal congresswoman who had been sworn in as mayor less than a day before she was gunned down in her home Saturday morning.

Ramirez ordered security measures for all of the state's mayors, though he gave no details on what that involved.

Ramon Castro Castro, Roman Catholic bishop of Cuernavaca, celebrated Mass at Mota's home Sunday and later spoke critically of a state where some areas are in control of organized crime.

"One theory could be that it was a warning to the other mayors," Castro said to reporters. "If you don't co-operate with organized crime, look at what will happen to you. It's to scare them."

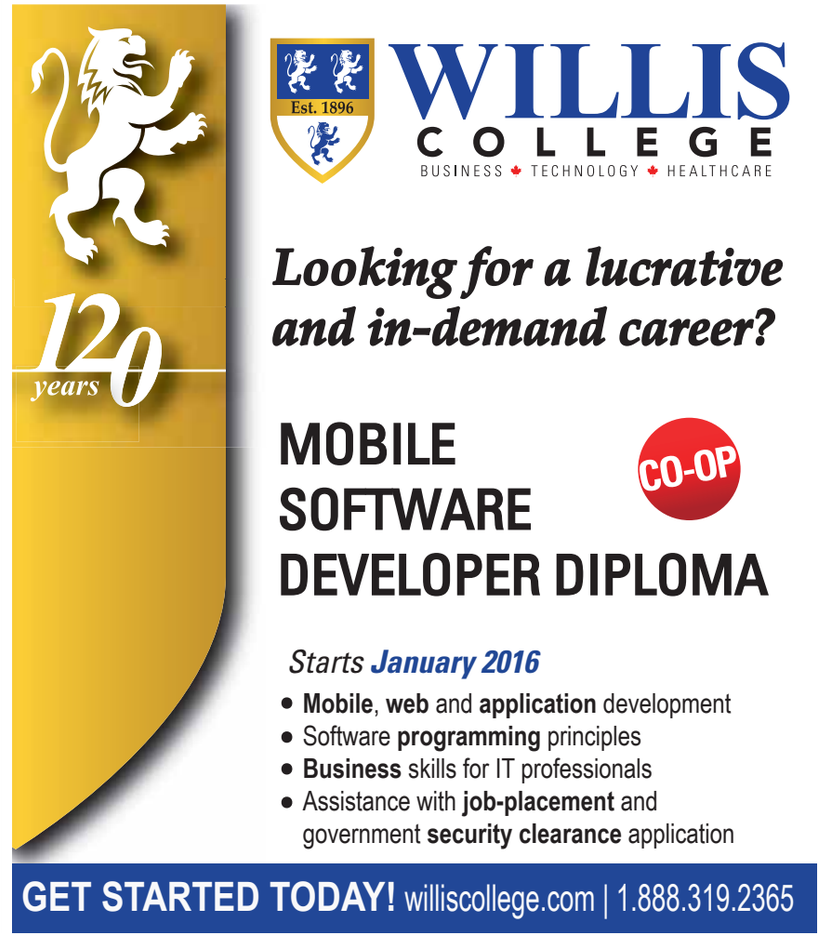
Following Mota's killing, two suspects were killed in a clash with police and three others arrested. Officials said they include a 32-year-old woman, an 18-year-old man and the minor. State Attorney General Javier Perez Duron said they had been tied to other crimes.

Efforts to clean out corrupt police who have protected gangs led Morelos to put officers under a unified state command in 2014. Temixco joined that system,.

Mota's centre-left Democratic Revolution Party released a statement describing her as "a strong and brave woman who on taking office as mayor, declared that her fight against crime would be frontal and direct."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gisela Mota, shown Friday at her swearing-in, was killed Saturday at her home. TONY RIVERA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Making it on social media

CONTENT CREATION

Lucrative for some, struggle for others

When online personality Essena O'Neill "quit" social media, she gained a wave of media coverage. The 19-year-old Australian said she earned close to $2,000 per post on her social-media channels without being a conventional celebrity.

South Korean singer Psy earned $5.9 million for his viral hit, Gangnam Style. The number of YouTube channels earning six figures is up 50 per cent from 2014, according to a company spokesman.

More people than ever are making a living online. How much are they banking — and how are they cashing in?

Essena O'Neill said she earned close to $2,000 per social-media post before she "quit" the platforms. ESSENA O'NEILL/INSTAGRAM

YOUTUBE: If you create your own content, you can become a YouTube partner and receive a small percentage of ad revenue from clips before your video or on in-video banners. **How much can you make?** James Dodds III of sketch comedy group TrueNuff.tv said he received about $1.57 per 1,000 views. But not all are so successful. Gaby Dunn of comedy channel Just Between Us, which has 500,000 subscribers, recently wrote they are "barely scraping by" and the money was "unpredictable" and "not enough to live."

VINE: The short-form video platform doesn't run ads like Youtube, but that hasn't stopped creators from earning six-figure salaries. Mainstream brands are increasingly turning to Vine stars for content creation to engage with users as naturally as possible. **How much can you make?** Cody Johns, who has 3.6 million followers and more than a billion Vine views, told Business Insider one video campaign can net him upward of $20,000. Rob Fishman, who co-founded digital-advertising group Niche, says the top creators can receive $50,000 for one six-second clip.

INSTAGRAM: Users can make money from gaining followings and offering that audience to advertisers. Typically, creators make money on the platform through product placement or being hired to garner publicity by posting event photos. **How much can you make?** Canadian style, fashion and travel blogger Ania Boniecka, who has just over 100,000 followers, said a single photo could net her $500. Anthony Danielle, co-founder of the Mobile Media Lab agency, has said more than 100,000 followers can net $700 to $900. More than 500,000 followers could be worth $2,000 to $3,000, and $4,000 is the most Instagrammers have been paid, says a Yahoo article.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

ENERGY

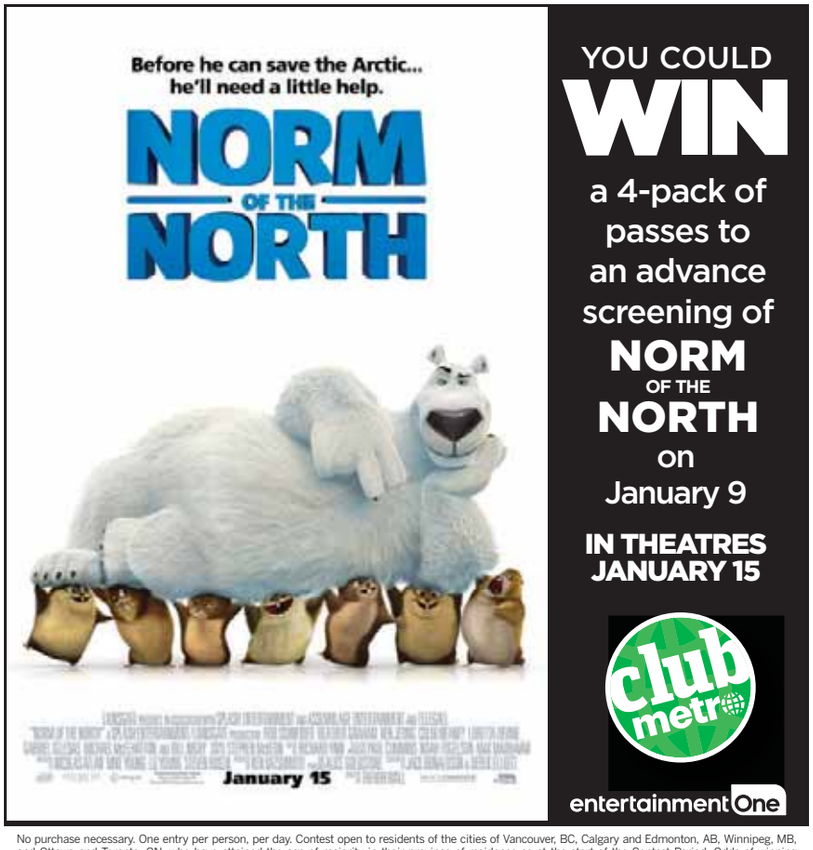
Google offering solar tips

The company that lets you compare air fares and translate foreign languages online wants to make it easier to weigh the costs and benefits of installing solar panels on household rooftops.

Google is rolling out a new online service that quickly tallies up considerations of going solar and whether homeowners should consider buying or leasing photovoltaic panels costing thousands of dollars. Google's Project Sunroof combines the eye-in-the-sky images behind Google Earth with calculations on how much shade trees cast over a rooftop, data on local weather patterns, industry pricing and available subsidies to arrive at its bottom line.

Interested potential customers are referred to solar-panel installers for further follow-up, cutting their marketing costs, said Carl Elkin, the senior software engineer behind the service. "We at Google believe in solar energy. The solar industry needs our help," he said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



No purchase necessary. One entry per person, per day. Contest open to residents of the cities of Vancouver, BC, Calgary and Edmonton, AB, Winnipeg, MB, and Ottawa and Toronto, ON, who have attained the age of majority in their province of residence as at the start of the Contest Period. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received in each city. Twenty (20) prizes are available to be won in each market, consisting of a 4-pack of passes to a screening of Norm of the North on Jan. 9, 2015. Approximate retail value of each prize is $50 CDN. Each selected entrant must correctly answer, unaided, a mathematical skill-testing question to be declared a winner. Contest Period opens at 12:01 am ET on Jan. 4, 2016 and closes at 11:59 pm ET on Jan. 7, 2016. To enter and for complete contest rules visit www.clubmetro.com

RETAIL

Food co-operatives fading

Food co-operative programs that allow members to scoop rice, sort organic vegetables and ring up sales in return for grocery discounts are fading fast amid a changing marketplace and fears of violating labour laws.

The "member labour" or volunteer programs are intertwined with the do-it-yourself idealism that launched a wave of co-ops in the '70s. But they have become rare. At Albany, New York's, Honest Weight Food Co-Op, an effort to drop its volunteer program has riled members, illustrating its cherished place in co-op culture.

Supporters say the involvement of member-owners differentiates co-ops in an age where even strip-mall supermarkets sell locally grown arugula.

"It changes people's relationship with the store," said Nate Horwitz, a 28-year member who became board president this month. "Where people work together, you have a very different feeling in the store. You have a very different loyalty to the store."

Working member programs were a basic feature of co-ops, launched decades ago during a flush of interest in natural living and alternatives to big capitalism. The programs offered cheap labour for stores with little capital and fit in snugly with co-op principles like open membership and democratic control.

Shoppers fill containers in the bulk department at Honest Weight Food Co-Op in Albany, N.Y. MIKE GROLL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Early co-ops foreshadowed the wider public's interest in local, wholesome food and then benefited once the wave hit. Honest Weight began in a cramped side-street store and is now a bright, modern market that rings up about $25 million annually in sales. It is among more than 200 co-ops nationwide that have combined sales of over $1.8 billion, according to a trade group.

Honest Weight's former board president mentioned the inefficiency of having roughly 1,200 working members cover shifts in explaining a board vote this fall to discontinue the program on the store's floor. Board members rescinded that vote after being told they overstepped their authority. But the initial uproar led to a shake-up of the board that cost the president his position.

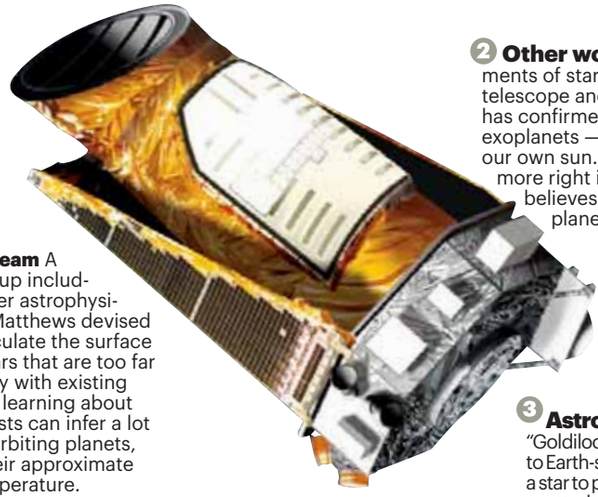
The larger issue weighing on the board at Honest Weight and other co-ops is the fear that labour officials could classify their working members as employees rather than volunteers, leaving them open to charges they are violating minimum-wage rules. A small number of co-ops have settled complaints over the decades instead of testing that interpretation, according to longtime observers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Monday, January 4, 2016

THE BIG THING: LIFE BEYOND EARTH

On planets right in our own Milky Way galaxy (which, to be fair, is pretty big at 9.5 hundred quadrillion kilometres across), there could be primordial soup brewing, life evolving, even whole societies developing and collapsing. We just don't know. But researchers are getting light-years closer. In a paper published this week in the journal Science Advances, a team including scientists from the University of British Columbia explains how they discovered a new, and more accurate, way to characterize extremely distant stars — including ones that may have orbiting planets hospitable to life. It's a step towards eventually meeting up with whomever or whatever may call those unknown worlds home. SOURCE: CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR



KEPLER SPACE OBSERVATORY (ARTIST RENDERING). NASA

1 **Distant dream** A research group including Vancouver astrophysicist Jaymie Matthews devised a way to calculate the surface gravity of stars that are too far away to study with existing methods. By learning about stars, scientists can infer a lot about their orbiting planets, including their approximate size and temperature.

2 **Other worlds** The project used measurements of star brightness from Canada's MOST telescope and NASA's Kepler spacecraft. Kepler has confirmed the existence of almost 2,000 exoplanets — planets that orbit stars other than our own sun. Preliminary findings point to billions more right in our own galaxy. Matthews says he believes alien life will be found on an exoplanet within 20 years.

3 **Astronomers' jackpot** The ultimate find is a "Goldilocks planet" — not too hot, not too cold, close to Earth-sized and just about the right distance from a star to possibly harbour liquid water. Kepler has spotted a handful of these cosy worlds so far.

How kindness can help us withstand the winter

COLLINS' CAPITAL

Steve Collins

Welcome back, and a very merry 2016 to you, or as merry as you can make it under fundament-freezing circumstances.

With the inevitability of January's credit-card statement, winter has finally made its entrance, and seems to have made up for lost time with a serious dump of snow and the return of that old familiar deep chill.

The city's snow-clearance cavalry has been re-mobilized for the battle that never ends, just pauses for a few months' ceasefire every year.

Civilians, too, unpack their arsenals of winter armour and resume the time-sucking ritual of suiting up, stripping off and the stomp-stomp-stomp to shake off the snow in entryways that serve as our seasonal airlocks.

It might also be time, I mildly suggest, to finally get those snow tires on. New provincial rules effective Jan. 1 mean you can now get a break on your car insurance for installing winter tires, in case being able to stop when you have to isn't enough reward in itself. It's an incentive to do yourself, and everyone on the road, a favour.

Our most important defence against cruelties this winter can inflict, after all, isn't any particular piece of winter equipment, but our consideration for each other.

For a quick 30-second demonstration of how this works, check out, as so many have, the video Ottawa's Adriesca Julot posted to Facebook last week. It shows OC Transpo driver Carlo DiFelice jumping out of his warm bus (and strict job description) to lend a hand to riders scaling the sudden post-Christmas snow banks to get on board.

The clip had by Sunday topped 1.2 million views, despite a distinct lack of drama — just a helping hand and appreciative words.

The low-key acts of kindness might be part of the attraction, a welcome change from the usual case where the phrases 'viral video' and 'OC Transpo' coincide with some more colourful (but depressing) display of boorishness.

OC Transpo says it's cooking up a commendation for DiFelice, and he deserves it, not just for his courtesy, but for his example. His willingness to help, though, isn't as rare as it can sometimes seem on a cranky and impatient transit system.

Last week, I watched a squad of volunteers spontaneously assemble to help a woman in a motorized wheelchair get onto her bus at snow-caked Mackenzie King Station, first trying in vain to push her up the ramp, then, when the snow proved both too slippery for her tires and too thick for the extendable ramp to function properly, clearing it off the sidewalk with boots and gloves.

She'd evidently been through this scenario a few times, and quarterbacked efforts by the driver and her vigilante helpers. When she finally made it on-board, there was a nice little burst of applause from the assembled strangers on the platform.

This is how we get through winter: preparation, improvisation and when it's needed, a little push. Don't hesitate to ask for one, or to give one. "All the best in 2016" can be a vague wish, or it can be an actual plan of action.

Steve Collins lives in Ottawa. He might also be the guy behind you on the bus, pretending not to notice you're reading this. Act casual.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
metroview

A new New Year's resolution: Enjoy exactly who we are

All will be well.

It's the title of a book of daily religious reflections Mum gave me a few years ago. I spent a while trying to read each meditation, but it's the title that has stuck.

Holidays, even among a large and loving family like mine, are not simple bliss. We had at least two minor dramas that I'm aware of, a new rescue dog with a penchant to nip at the kids, far too much kitchen time for my parents, elbow deep in dishes or a turkey, the general mayhem of a house packed with dozens, and hangovers.

I didn't see everyone I wanted to, or call everyone I should have. And each of my three siblings is juggling some confluence of life's stress: trying to find a new home in Vancouver that's big enough and just this side of affordable, while making a mark in a new job; training the Mexican rescue dog who looks like Dobby the house-elf (loveable, but unpredictable); going back to school as an adult and fretting over grades and debt.

Just before Christmas dinner, Dad stood up at the head of the table. Westwoods don't give each other gifts (we do secret Santa) — but everyone makes each other cards. It's a serious requirement. No store-bought allowed. This year, Dad didn't just make us cards — he wrote us poems. And then he performed them.

It's redundant to say no life (no holiday) is perfect.

One by one, eldest to youngest, he recited slant rhymes that captured our lives, at this moment. They were sweet, tinged with his offbeat humour.

He didn't gloss over our questionable histories, and noted I can "be goaded to debate fiercely on topics of gender" — a reference to a run-in we had when I was taking a gender theory class in university.

But each one ended on the same theme: Look how far you've come. And: You're doing just fine. Also: We love you.

It is pat to say nothing is simple. It's redundant to say no life (no holiday) is perfect. Still, every snag can come as a surprise. An inconvenience is never foreseen, even though every day holds one. And yet for many of us, when it's put into perspective via a poem written by your dad, life really is good.

The new year is often a time to reset what we want to be. But what if, instead of imagining who we want to be, we decided to enjoy exactly who we are, and where we are.

All will be well, the book says. And all is well, too.

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How do you choose the right RSP for you?

NEST EGG

Finding the right fit comes down to your knowledge and expectations

Michelle Williams

Thinking about opening a retirement savings plan? First you have to decide where and how you want to invest the money. ISTOCK

You're thinking about opening a retirement savings plan. That's a good thing. Aside from the obvious benefit of creating a nest egg for your retirement, you may also get a nice deduction on your upcoming tax return.

And the savings you put away can have several years of tax-deferred growth before you withdraw the money.

Many rookie investors think that once you decide how much to put into your RSP, you're done. However, you also have to decide where and how you want to invest the money — which vehicles and products to use.

"Once you're ready to invest, you have to decide on your RSP type," says Kurt Rosentreter, a financial advisor and chartered accountant. "One option is to explore the group plan that may be offered by your employer." This type of plan is sponsored by your employer, who may top up or match your contribution. "It's wise to take advantage of this because the employer's contribution is like free money."

An RSP is a "portable asset," says Kathleen Peace, partner and wealth advisor at Woodgate Financial Inc. and Investment Planning Counsel. "So if you leave your job, you can take it to any financial institution."

Another benefit is that you can arrange to have contributions automatically withdrawn from your pay, so you won't miss the money. But you may not be happy with the investment options your employer's plan offers. If you're looking for more control of your investments, another option is to set up an individual plan with your bank.

"In this case, you deposit your money into an RSP account and you can choose to buy the bank's financial products according to characteristics like your risk tolerance and your financial goals," explains Rosentreter.

For those interested in doing their own investing, "self-directed RSPs can be managed online. You can do this through most financial institutions," explains Peace. "This is an attractive option to the investor who wants to select and manage their investments themselves and pay minimal transaction fees."

Remember to take stock of your own goals and expectations before choosing an investment.

"How and where you invest should be aligned to your risk tolerance, time horizon, tax bracket, financial knowledge, return expectations, retirement goals and other factors," says Rosentreter.

Individual vs. spousal plan

When you contribute to an individual plan, you make the contribution and you get the benefit of the tax deduction. But sometimes it's worth considering a spousal or common-law RSP.

"Usually it's the higher-income earner making a contribution to their spouse's RSP," says wealth advisor Kathleen Peace.

"The higher-earning spouse gets the tax deduction but the lower-earning spouse owns the investment. When it comes time to withdraw funds from the RSP, the couple can better manage their taxes by income splitting, as long as the spouse's contribution has remained in the plan for at least three calendar years."

The decision to open a spousal RSP, says financial advisor Kurt Rosentreter, should take into account "your income-tax bracket today and in the future for you and your spouse, your investment strategy, and your overall retirement plan."

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Your essential daily news

Five kilometres open along Germany's first bicycle freeway that will connect 10 cities

Astrology forecasts for 2016

HOROSCOPES

What's the year have in store? Take a look at the stars

Sally Brompton
For Metro Canada

Aries (March 21 - April 20)

Mars, your ruler, moves into passionate Scorpio at the start of the year, making it impossible to deny your feelings. Whatever it is that moves you — emotionally, mentally, intellectually or even spiritually — that is what you must dedicate yourself to in 2016. But don't overdo it. Jupiter's retrograde phase from January to May warns you cannot charge at life at 100 miles per hour all the time.

Make quality work your goal and get creative (write a book, record a song, launch a vlog) in April and August when the Sun's influence is at a peak, then sit back and enjoy the applause in the fall.

Taurus (April 21 - May 21)

A solar eclipse in the friendship area of your chart in March means you will be expanding your area of activity, discovering new places and meeting new people. Who knew you could be so adventurous! But there are old scores to settle as well and the influence of Mars in January and February, then again in June and July, will encourage you to assert yourself in one-to-one situations.

Be blunt if you have to. Let loved ones and work colleagues know you will no longer dance to their tune — not because it's a bad tune but because you've got one of your own.

Gemini (May 22 - June 21)

Saturn and Uranus will pull you in opposite directions in 2016, Saturn trying to keep you tied to the past, Uranus trying to show you how wonderful the future could be if you have the courage to let go and go with the flow.

Mars in adventurous Sagittarius in August and September should tip the balance in Uranus' favour and come the close of the year you will be moving in a radical new direction. Relationship-wise you'll need a strong and steady partner to anchor your need for thrill-seeking in the real world of work and family and making ends met. A marvellous roller-coaster year!

Cancer (June 22 - July 23)

The solar eclipse in your fellow Water sign of Pisces on March 9 will encourage you to look further afield for things to inspire you. Even if you are one of those stay-at-home type Cancers you will want to travel this year, and your wanderlust will take you to some fantastic places where you meet some remarkable people.

By the time of the second solar eclipse of the year, in September, you may have put down roots in a completely new environment. Alternatively, you can stay where you are and expand your awareness through books and study. The world of the mind is your playground.

Leo (July 24 - Aug. 23)

Mars, planet of action and ambition, moves through the most dynamic area of your chart from March to May and again through August and September and these are the best months by far to begin some kind of creative or artistic endeavour. Never doubt you have what it takes to be the biggest and the best. Never doubt you have the talent to see your name up in lights.

Success will be all the more enjoyable, of course, if you can share it with someone special and Venus in the partnership area of your chart from mid-February to mid-March is sure to bring love into your life.

Virgo (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)

Jupiter's retrograde phase from January to May will in some way hold you back from realizing your dreams and it's inevitable you will feel frustrated. But when the planet of good fortune turns in your favour again there will be no stopping you and by the time of the solar eclipse in your sign on Sept. 1 your life will be transformed.

It's likely you will come into money later in the year and you should use what you gain to enrich both yourself and those you are closest to emotionally and mentally. Virgo never stops learning. What will the next stage of your education be?

Libra (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)

Jupiter's move into your sign in early September will in some way or other reward you for the patience and commitment you have shown through the rest of the year. Libra may be the sign of the balance but sometimes it is hard for even you to keep your cool, especially when planet Uranus seems so determined to disrupt both your domestic arrangements and your relationships. But life is a learning experience and come December, when Jupiter really starts to shine, your ability to see both sides of every story will put you at a huge advantage. Be amazing, Libra!

Scorpio (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)

Mars in your sign at the start of the year will endow you with a huge surge of energy and in both your career and your private life you will be making changes left, right and centre. Not only that but a second visit of Mars to your sign in June and July will give you a second bite of the cherry — and help you clear up some of the mess you made earlier in your headlong rush to be a success.

The other big influence is Jupiter, which remains in the friendship area of your chart until September. It's there to remind you that you can't do it all on your own.

Sagittarius (Nov. 23 - Dec. 21):

Sagittarius and Saturn both begin with the letter S but there the similarity ends. Sags are carefree and love taking risks, while Saturn is cautious and not one to gamble.

So, with Saturn in your sign throughout the year there is sure to be tension, but tension can be creative, and financially lucrative, if you plan ahead and accept the need to compromise.

If you start the year slowly (by your standards at least) you can build up a head of steam that will make you unstoppable when Mars moves in your favour in August and September. For Sagittarius, there is no such word as "cannot."

Capricorn (Dec. 22 - Jan. 20)

Pluto in your sign will continue to change your life in subtle yet far-reaching ways and as early as Jan. 6, when Pluto joins with the Sun, then again on Feb. 6, when love planet Venus gets in on the act, your outlook, your lifestyle, indeed your very Capricorn DNA will undergo a transformation, though it may not seem that dramatic at the time.

Where will this leave you? Energized and liberated, free to follow your own emotional and creative needs. You will still have responsibilities, of course, but they will no longer hold you back from fulfilling your limitless potential.

Aquarius (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)

The lunar eclipse in your fellow Air sign of Libra on March 23 will sweep away restrictions and by the time a new moon in the same sign comes around at the start of October you will be on a completely new path through life and loving every moment of it. Not everyone will be as delighted as you though and some relationships will fall by the wayside, but it's your chance for a new beginning and you have no intention of letting it pass. Aquarius has as much right to shine as anyone else and you intend to dazzle and delight every chance you get.

Pisces (Feb. 20 - Mar. 20)

Jupiter, planet of good fortune, stays in the partnership area of your chart until September, by which time you will be on excellent terms with people who can help you move closer to realizing your dreams, and as the solar eclipse on Sept. 1 brings one major project to a successful conclusion you will quickly move on to the next.

Saturn's ongoing influence will find ways to remind you that only quality work counts, but you won't need much guidance. On every level — mental, emotional, professional and financial — you know a good thing when you see it: yourself!

Financial health is within your grasp

PLANNING

Make it a resolution to take control of your money

Gail Vaz-Oxlade
For Metro Canada

This week, make a date with your partner to go over your finances. ISTOCK

If you're one of the people who have been letting the other guy handle the money, I've got a strong cup of coffee here for you: Take a sniff. While it may seem easier to let buddy deal with the dollars, that'll only save you some short-term fighting.

In the long term, you might find your family's financial reins are knotted up pretty badly.

Some people are unwilling to do the daily discipline of good money management; they'd rather leave it to their mates to manage the minutiae.

Others don't want to know the mess they've made. And some — even smart, hard-working folks — just haven't figured out that not everything you want you can have right away.

You need a plan.

Whenever you abdicate responsibility for dealing with the day-to-day of your money, whether you say, "Oh (s)he's better with the details," or "I just don't have the time," you're giving away control of your wealth.

If you don't know what the hell is going on with your money, you shouldn't be surprised to wake up broke. And giving it away isn't just handing over the money management to your mate.

It's also letting someone else make your investment decisions, allowing someone else to tell you how much money you can afford to borrow, and letting yourself get pushed into decisions you aren't absolutely convinced are good for your long-term financial health.

You work hard for your money, so hard for it honey. Why won't you spend a little time paying attention to what you're doing with it? And what it's doing for you.

No one gets wealthy by accident. Pay attention to your money.

Money management may not be the most exciting part of your life; not everyone gets turned on counting up their coins.

But it beats the heck out of having to deal with the negative fallout of having not paid attention. And, you know what? It doesn't take all that much time.

This week make a date to sit down with your mate and go over your money. From how much you're spending on food (you do have a budget, right?), to when you expect to be debt free (and a debt repayment plan?), to when you'll need to update your will (please tell me you have a will!), the conversations you have will lay the foundation for sharing your wealth: your wealth of knowledge, your wealth of insight, your wealth of experience.

If you have "people" who are managing your investments, insurance, estate plan, taxes... whatever, make an appointment to review how things sit.

Waiting for their once-a-year obligatory call isn't good enough. And, for heaven's sake, stop thinking that those people have your best interests at heart. They are in business to make money. They have bosses and sales targets and corporate expectations to meet.

If you don't have the time to take care of your money, why the dickens would they be interested in doing any more than the bare minimum to keep you as a client?

No one gets wealthy by accident. Pay attention to your money.

For more money advice, visit Gail's website at gailvazoxlade.com

SECOND CITY

Undoing anxiety in the spotlight

A decade ago, Cameron Algie couldn't imagine getting up on a stage, let alone performing improv comedy in front of an audience. Gripped by anxiety, he scoffed when his therapist suggested he might do well in an improv class at Second City Toronto. "It seemed like the scariest thing to do," recalls the Cambridge, Ont., native. "Anxiety is all about anticipation and imagining all these scary things, but once I was there in the class, it really was scary but fun."

Algie went on to complete all five stages of the improv classes there and then studied at the conservatory level. Now he teaches Improv for Anxiety or Public Speaking at the Second City Training Centre in Toronto.

Group work and building social skills are also a focus of the centre's new class, Improv for Teens on the Autism Spectrum, which begins Jan. 9.

Instructor Cassie Moes, who pitched the idea for the class, learned how to work with people with special needs as a middle-school teacher. She also had experience teaching improv exercises for people with special needs and did respite care at Reach Child and Youth Development Society in Delta, B.C.

"As kids get older — kids who are on the spectrum — there's not a lot of programming and resources that's of good quality for them to explore different things," says the Vancouver native. "So I really wanted to offer a program where not only will they get the social element that improv really provides but they would also just get to learn some skills which they can apply in their day-to-day life."

Algie says the biggest obstacle for students in the anxiety class is self-judgment. "When you stand in front of an audience, the audience is never judging you as harshly as you're judging you," says Algie. "If you make a little mistake onstage, the audience probably doesn't notice or care or think of it as a mistake. They probably laughed."

Moes says they tell students not to try to be funny.

"I always try to say, who you are and what you have and what you bring inherently is enough," she says. "You are protected by the framework of the game. The more you let yourself go, those are the people who have the most success, the people with no filter."

Algie and Moes say some anxiety alumni have gone on to perform in front of hundreds and even formed their own troupes.

The Improv for Teens on the Spectrum classes are for "high-functioning independent teens" ages 13 to 19. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Cassie Moes teaches improv classes for teens on the autism spectrum at Second City Training Centre. THE CANADIAN PRESS

COLLEGE DEGREE CRAFT BEER

Brewing good business

In the last decade, the number of craft breweries has grown to more than 4,000 in the U.S. today, from more than 1,400 in 2005, according to the Brewers Association. As the industry gets more competitive, some universities are now offering programs on the business of craft beer.

Years ago, a lot of breweries started with a focus on beer, said Gregory Dunkling, director of the University of Vermont's new online business of craft beer certificate program. Then a home brewer may have been able to create great recipes but didn't have the business acumen, which these courses teach.

Portland State University in Oregon started an online business of craft brewing program in 2013. University of Portland and San Diego State University's College of Extended Studies also have business of craft beer certificate programs. Classes for San Diego State's program are held at local breweries and at the university, but not online. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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ROBOCOP V TERMINATOR

Which '80s cyborg wore it better?

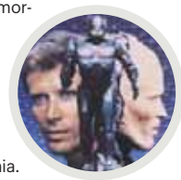
RoboCop and The Terminator are two of the most iconic sci-fi films of the 1980s. Both are set in a post-apocalyptic world where man and machine merge in an unforgettable cyborg. The franchises even spawned a four-issue comic-book crossover by cartoonist Frank Miller in 1992. But head-to-(metallic)-head, which futuristic cyborg ruled the silver screen?

Best Mission In RoboCop, police officer Alex Murphy (played by Peter Weller) is killed by a gang of thugs, then revived and transformed by a mega-corporation into the ultimate (and shiniest) beat cop. In The Terminator, Arnold Schwarzenegger famously plays a cyborg assassin who travels back in time to stop the saviour of humanity. As far as missions go, that one's hard to top.
Winner: The Terminator

Best Outfit While the Terminator has snazzy wraparound shades and a punky leather jacket, RoboCop gets a chrome bodysuit with built-in weapons and sleek sound effects. **Winner:** RoboCop, obviously.

Best Setting The Terminator prowls the suburban sprawl of '80's L.A., while RoboCop patrols the mean streets of dystopian Detroit. **Winner:** Both look equally scary. This one's a draw.

Best Ride RoboCop's 1985 Ford Taurus may be the most ordinary supercar in movie history, though it did have an onboard computer (remember, this was back in the '80s). The Terminator drives an assortment of stolen cars, including a '70s-era Chevy Nova, which he plows through a police station.
Winner: RoboCop



Best Catchphrase RoboCop's two most memorable lines are his understated warning to evildoers ("Dead or alive, you're coming with me") and his ominous advice for Detroit's youth ("Stay out of trouble"). But neither had the cultural cachet of the Terminator's unstoppable "I'll be back" — Arnie even used it on the campaign trail for governor of California.
Winner: The Terminator, baby.

Whether you're a Robo-rooter or a member of Arnie's army, you can relive both movies in all their '80s glory this month on Hollywood Suite. Check out RoboCop and The Terminator back-to-back on January 12, uncut and commercial-free. Take advantage of Hollywood Suite's free preview, or sign up for only $6 (or less) a month. Hollywood Suite takes you back to the '70s, '80s, '90s and 2000s with hundreds of movies on 4 HDTV Channels, Hollywood Suite On Demand and the Hollywood Suite GO app. Learn more at hollywoodsuite.ca.

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STAR METRO Content Solutions

JOHANNA SCHNELLER **WHAT I'M WATCHING**

Grace in an unexpected place

Transparent creator Jill Soloway teases out the show's scenes that give viewers startling insight into the characters. CONTRIBUTED

THE SHOW: Transparent, Season 2, Episode 10 (Shomi)
THE MOMENT: The Embrace

Maura Pfefferman (Jeffrey Tambor), a 60-something transitioning, transgender woman, lies on a bed with Vicki (Anjelica Huston), who's had a double mastectomy, astride her.

"I don't know what to do," Maura whispers. Slowly, slowly, they begin to have sex.

The camera doesn't cut away.

It stays steadily on these two imperfect people.

So unaccustomed are we to seeing that, that at first it feels invasive, even merciless. But if you don't flinch, you'll realize that what you're witnessing is a moment of grace.

I'm so in love with this show I don't know where to begin.

To focus on a serious scene risks minimizing how slyly hysterical it is, how uncountable the witty lines and brilliant muttered asides, how effortlessly the actors throw them away.

You could watch Transparent for the laughs alone, and they would be smarter and more numerous than on any other show.

But creator Jill Soloway isn't content with that — she also gives us scenes of startling insight and intimacy, which she builds up to so skillfully that someone dancing with her reflection; or eating from a microwave, naked and alone in the dark; or hanging on the side of a pool, talking to her sister about sex, will make you gasp.

And when, in the last two episodes, Soloway brings together the many seemingly disparate strands she's been teasing out — well, if you were standing up, your knees would buckle.

Seriously, this show is a game-changer.

Nothing else comes close.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

DOCUMENTARY

Boston Marathon film celebrates spirit

America's marquee marathon is ready for its closeup.

Boston, the first feature-length documentary film about the Boston Marathon, is in the works. Its creators say the movie will go well beyond the 2013 bombings to retrace the iconic footrace's first steps in 1897.

"Over the years, the Boston Marathon has had so many extraordinary stories of people achieving and accomplishing things," said producer Megan Williams, an Oscar-nominated filmmaker. "It's like looking at cultural and social change over the last century through the lens of this major sporting event."

Two feature films (one starring Mark Wahlberg), a stage play and an HBO special also are in production, though they're all about the 2013 finish line attacks that killed three spectators and wounded more than 260 others.

No Boston documentary would be complete without the dark events of 2013. Boston, however, will focus less on the chaos than the comeback. The producers had 56 cameras along the course in 2014 for the marathon's first running since the bombings.

Director Jon Dunham said the city's determination to take back its namesake race will be a recurring theme in the movie, which was conceived before the attacks.

But the film will be a sort of highlights reel from the 120-year-old marathon, the nation's oldest. The Boston Athletic Association gave Dunham exclusive rights to its archive for the film.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

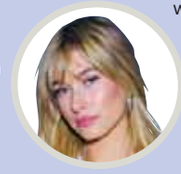
Meb Keflezighi wins the 118th Boston Marathon in 2014. Keflezighi was the first American man to win the race in 31 years. Boston is set to premiere in April 2017. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GOSSIP BRIEFS

Camille Cosby must give deposition against Bill

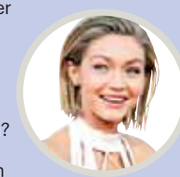
A federal judge has denied a motion by Bill Cosby's wife to throw out a subpoena requiring her to give a deposition in a lawsuit brought by seven women who accuse the comedian of sexually assaulting them decades ago. The ruling issued Thursday by U.S. Judge Magistrate David Hennessey in Springfield, Mass., means Camille Cosby is scheduled to be deposed by lawyers for the women on Wednesday. In his 12-page decision, Hennessey said Camille Cosby failed to prove that she and her husband were protected by the state's marital disqualification law. He also rejected claims that the value of the testimony would be outweighed by the "undue burden" it would cause.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bieber locks lips with Hailey Baldwin at NYE bash



It looks like Justin Bieber is hoping to kick off 2016 by putting to rest those pesky dating rumours — like Kourtney Kardashian, or him trying to woo back Selena Gomez — because the Biebs rang in the New Year "sucking face" with additional rumoured girlfriend Hailey Baldwin at Richie Akiva's villa party in St. Barts.
NED EHRBAR/METRO

One Direction's Zayn Malik strikes a pose for Gigi Hadid



Speaking of pop stars' dating lives, exactly how close are former One Direction member Zayn Malik and Gigi Hadid getting? Close enough for her to post photos of his bare chest to Instagram. Oh, and there was an adorable kitten in the pic, too, so it's basically peak Internet. Hadid posted the black-and-white photo without comment, just a simple image of Malik's headless torso cuddling her beloved cat, Cleo. Fans easily recognized Malik by his tattoos. NED EHRBAR/METRO

metro SPORTS

The Cleveland Browns had no comment on a report that injured QB Johnny Manziel went to Las Vegas on Saturday

WORLD JUNIORS

Coaches not to blame: Renney

Tom Renney came to the defence of Canada's coaching staff at the world junior hockey championship on Sunday.

The president and chief executive officer of Hockey Canada spoke a day after Canada dropped a 6-5 decision to Finland in the quarter-finals of the international event, guaranteeing a sixth-place finish at the tournament. It is the lowest Canada has placed at the world juniors since 1998.

"I thought our team was very well-prepared, I thought we had as good a coaching staff at the competition as anyone," Renney said in a conference room at the team's hotel. "There's no doubt in my mind that our guys put the time and effort in to have the team ready to go.

"There is a point in time where that transfer of responsibility goes from the coach to the player."

.860

Canada's team save percentage, which was second-worst in the 10-team tournament. Goaltenders Mackenzie Blackwood and Mason McDonald combined for a 3.58 goals-against average.

Head coach Dave Lowry's squad of under-20s struggled throughout the tournament with discipline on the ice. Canada took 10 minor penalties in a 5-2 loss to Sweden in the final game of the preliminary round before taking nine penalties in the quarter-final loss to Finland.

A particularly costly series of events saw forward Jake Virtanen — on loan from the NHL's Vancouver Canucks — take a double minor in the third period against Finland. While killing that penalty defenceman Joe Hicketts took a delay-of-game penalty when trying to clear the puck.

It was during the ensuing 5-on-3 that Patrik Laine scored the game-winning goal for Finland. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mario Butler of the Bills breaks up a pass intended for Jets wide receiver Brandon Marshall in Orchard Park, N.Y., on Sunday. TOM SZCZERBOWSKI/GETTY IMAGES

Quarterback Peyton Manning returned to action, sparking the Broncos offence to a win over the Chargers in Denver. DOUG PENSINGER/GETTY IMAGES

Panthers quarterback Cam Newton congratulates receiver Devin Funchess on catching a touchdown against the Buccaneers in Charlotte, N.C. STREETER LECKA/GETTY IMAGES

Panthers, Broncos wrap up conferences' top seeds

NFL

Ryan and Bills deny Jets a trip to post-season

Carolina closed out its remarkable season by wrapping up home-field advantage in the NFC. Denver turned to Peyton Manning to take advantage of New England's slip up in the AFC. And Rex Ryan made certain to continue the New York Jets' playoff drought.

Carolina and Denver wrapped up the No. 1 seed playoff seeds in each conference by winning at home on the final day of the regular season on Sunday. Carolina routed Tampa Bay 38-10, while Denver held off San Diego 27-20 to win the AFC West title.

New England will be the No. 2 seed in the AFC after losing at Miami, while Arizona will have the other bye in the NFC despite getting routed 36-6 by Seattle.

Denver's victory finally settled the AFC playoff picture. Cincinnati is the No. 3 seed and will host AFC North rival Pittsburgh in a wild-card game, while AFC South champion Houston is the No. 4 seed and will host Kansas City, winners of 10 straight games.

The NFC playoff picture wasn't to be fully settled until after the completion of Sunday night's game between Minnesota and Green Bay. Seattle's blowout win over the Cardinals means the Seahawks will avoid a trip to Lambeau Field to open the playoffs as long as the Packers and Vikings didn't finish in a tie. The winner between the Vikings and Packers will be the No. 3 seed.

Washington, which closed the season with its fourth straight win, is the fourth seed and will host the No. 5 seed.

The highlight of the day was Ryan and the Buffalo Bills stopping the Jets from making the playoffs and giving the Steelers the final playoff spot in the AFC. The Bills beat the Jets 22-17, while Pittsburgh knocked off Cleveland 28-12, the only results that would have gotten the Steelers into the post-season. The Jets have not made the playoffs since 2010.

"I've got a lot of friends over there, and I want them to be successful, but not at my expense," Ryan said.

Ryan has plenty of friends in the Steel City now.

"A lot of thanks to coach Ryan and the rest of the Bills and everybody in Buffalo," Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger said. "I know they're excited about 8-8 and we're excited they got us in."

Denver struggled in the first half against San Diego before inserting Manning in place of Brock Osweiler at quarterback and holding on late for the seven-point victory.

Houston also clinched the AFC South with its win over Jacksonville and will host Kansas City after the Chiefs beat Oakland for their 10th straight victory. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PLAYOFF TEAMS

AFC	NFC
1) Denver (12-4)	1) Carolina (15-1)
2) New England (12-4)	2) Arizona (13-3)
3) Cincinnati (12-4)	4) Washington (9-7)
4) Houston (9-7)	Others: Green Bay,
5) Kansas City (11-5)	Minnesota, Seattle (10-6)
6) Pittsburgh (10-6)	

PINK SLIPS

Hours after losing to the Steelers, Browns owner Jimmy Haslam fired coach Mike Pettine and general manager Ray Farmer following their second straight losing season in charge. Pettine went 10-22 in two years.

NBA

Bulls' Butler serves up loss to Raptors

SUNDAY in Toronto

BULLS	RAPTORS
115	113

Jimmy Butler scored all but two of his 42 points in the second half Sunday to lift the Chicago Bulls over the Toronto Raptors 115-113.

DeMar DeRozan had 24 points for the Raptors (21-14), while Kyle Lowry added 22 points and 10 assists. Luis Scola had 22 points, Cory Joseph finished with 13 and DeMarre Carroll added 10. Pau Gasol added 19 points for a Bulls team (20-12) missing star point guard Derrick Rose. The Raptors were looking for payback, winless in their previous six games against the Bulls, including a 104-97 defeat just six nights earlier in Chicago.

Toronto led for virtually all but the first quarter in a thrilling Eastern Conference matchup Sunday, taking an 87-81 advantage into the fourth quarter in front of a capacity crowd of 19,800 fans at the Air Canada Centre. But Butler was unstoppable down the stretch, and when he drilled a three in DeRozan's face with two-and-a-half minutes to play, it pulled the Bulls to within two points.

E'Twaun Moore's basket with 58 seconds would tie the game, and then Butler launched a three over Carroll with 31 seconds to play to put the Bulls up by a point. A Jonas Valanciunas dunk with five seconds left had the Raptors — who are two spots ahead of Chicago in second in the East — within two points, but DeRozan's three-point attempt clanged around the rim before missing its target.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NCAA

Simmons' solo act earns Tigers victory

Ben Simmons used his Southeastern Conference debut to remind everybody why he was the league's preseason player of the year.

Simmons scored 36 points and grabbed 14 rebounds as the LSU Tigers beat Vanderbilt 90-82 Saturday night in the SEC opener for both teams. He scored 18 in each half, and he also had four assists to go with a steal and one block.

Ben Simmons STACY REVERE/GETTY IMAGES

"I knew the bigs couldn't guard me," Simmons said. At one point in the second half, LSU coach Johnny Jones let Simmons handle the ball to slow down the game when Vanderbilt went small. "To do that your first night out in this type of environment here says a lot about him," Jones said.

Keith Hornsby added 23 points, and Craig Victor II added 11 as the Tigers (8-5) picked up their fourth victory in five.

Jones has yet to lose to Vanderbilt, improving to 5-0 even with this the third straight at Memorial Gym in this series. Vanderbilt (8-5) came in leading the SEC in scoring defence, holding opponents to 61.8 points, and third nationally holding opponents to 35.8 per cent shooting. With 7-foot-1 junior Luke Kornet still out with a torn MCL, the Commodores struggled to slow down Simmons. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL IN BRIEF

Blackhawks loan D-liner Rundblad to Swiss team

The Chicago Blackhawks have loaned defenceman David Rundblad to the ZSC Lions in Switzerland.

The Blackhawks announced the move on Sunday.

The 25-year-old Rundblad, a native of Lycksele, Sweden, has two assists in nine games with Chicago this season. He has four goals and 21 assists in 113 career NHL games.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Habs' Weise facing absence after Winter Classic injury

Montreal Canadiens forward Dale Weise was placed on injured reserve Sunday after suffering an upper-body injury in a 5-1 win over Boston at the Winter Classic on New Year's Day.

Weise, 27, is expected to be out of the lineup for two to three weeks. The Winnipeg native has 20 points (11 goals, nine assists) in 40 games this season.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Blues remind Palace why they are champs

PREMIER LEAGUE ROUNDUP

Rejuvenated Chelsea shows class as Everton holds Spurs

Chelsea signalled its intent to surge up the Premier League by crushing Crystal Palace 3-0 away from home on Sunday in a stylish display that had shades of last season's cruise to the championship.

Oscar, Willian and Diego Costa scored for Chelsea, which is out of realistic title contention following a dismal start to its defence but could still challenge for a Champions League spot on the evidence of its performance at Selhurst Park.

The champions are unbeaten in four matches under caretaker manager Guus Hiddink since firing Jose Mourinho a week before Christmas, but are still languishing in 14th place — 13 points behind fourth-place Tottenham.

Spurs lost ground in the title race by drawing 1-1 at Everton in Sunday's other game, with Dele Alli's superb volley earning Spurs a point after cancelling out Aaron Lennon's superb opener.

But Spurs' domination at Goodison Park shows they are genuine challengers for the trophy. Only six points separate Tottenham and its north London rival Arsenal in first place, and Spurs have only lost twice all season in the league.

Tottenham ended the busy festive period with 10 points from a possible 12, more than any other side in the league.

"The way we played today, we can achieve what we want," Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino said.

The belief appears to be back at Chelsea, which looks a different side to the one that struggled under Mourinho. Its attacking players are playing with more freedom, with Spain internationals Cesc Fabregas and Costa excelling against Palace.

Costa ran onto Fabregas' through-ball, cut in and squared a pass for Oscar to sidefoot home into an empty net for the opening goal in the 29th. Willian struck a rising shot into the net from long range to make it 2-0 in the 60th and then played a part in the third goal, sending in a shot that was parried out to the feet of Costa inside the six-yard box. Costa couldn't miss.

Chelsea midfielder Oscar collides with Crystal Palace's Jason Puncheon at Selhurst Park in South London on Sunday.
ADRIAN DENNIS/GETTY IMAGES

"That was the Chelsea of last year, I think," Chelsea captain John Terry said.

The only negative for Chelsea was the sight of Eden Hazard hobbling off with a groin injury. The Belgium winger has failed to reproduce his fine form from last season, when he was voted player of the season in England.

Alli has been one of the success stories of this season, establishing himself as a regular for Tottenham and also breaking into the England squad in his first year in the Premier League. Last season, he was playing in the third tier with MK Dons.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DIVISION TABLE

	GP	W-D-L	Pts.
Arsenal	20	13-3-4	42
Leicester	20	11-7-2	40
Man. City	20	12-3-5	39
Tottenham	20	9-9-2	36
Man. United	20	9-6-5	33
West Ham	20	8-8-4	32
Crys. Palace	20	9-4-7	31
Liverpool	20	8-6-6	30
Watford	20	8-5-7	29
Stoke City	20	8-5-7	29
Everton	20	6-9-5	27
West Brom	20	7-5-8	26
S'hampton	20	6-6-8	24
Chelsea	20	6-5-9	23
Norwich	20	6-5-9	23
B'mouth	20	5-6-9	21
Swansea	20	4-7-9	19
Newcastle	20	4-5-11	17
Sunderland	20	4-3-12	15
Aston Villa	20	1-5-14	8

Champions League
Europa League
Relegation

LA LIGA

Madrid fails to gain ground in title race

Real Madrid squandered a great opening goal and a chance to catch Barcelona in the Spanish league standings when it slipped to a 2-2 draw at Valencia in a match it ended with 10 men on Sunday.

Madrid seemed set to romp to an easy victory after Karim Benzema finished off a superb move in the 16th minute, but Valencia's Dani Parejo levelled from the penalty spot just before halftime.

Gareth Bale headed Madrid back in front in the 82nd despite his team playing a man down after Mateo Kovacic saw a direct red card, only for Paco Alcacer to strike right back for the hosts a minute later to spark a thrilling finish by both teams.

Coach Rafa Benitez will face even more scrutiny after Madrid failed to capitalize on Barcelona's scoreless stalemate at Espanyol on Saturday and remained two points behind the defending champions, which have a game to play.

Ronaldo and Real were frustrated by the 2-2 draw
GETTY IMAGES

Madrid also fell four points behind provisional leader Atletico Madrid, the only title contender to win this round.

Benitez said "I can't stop some people from speculating" about his future.

Benitez's counterpart, Gary Neville, remained winless in his fourth league game since taking over at Valencia, but his team earned a morale-boosting result.

"That was the best performance we have had over 90 minutes. It wasn't enough, but you have to be practical, Gareth Bale was on the other side," Neville said. Elsewhere, a Bruno Soriano double gave Villareal a 2-1 win over Deportivo la Coruna and a fifth straight win. As a result Villarreal are now just one point adrift of Real Madrid in third.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RECIPE Sweet and Spicy Salmon

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

Today is Ceri's birthday so we'll be eating cake, but you should totally make this. This recipe comes together so quickly and easily you have no excuse for not making a healthy dinner.

Ready in
Prep time: 25 minutes
Serves 4

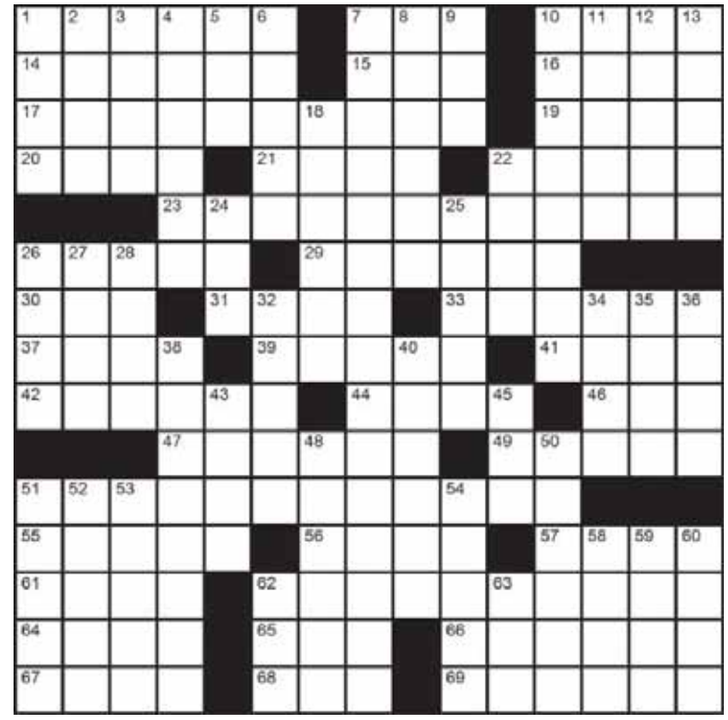
Ingredients
- 3 Tbsp soy sauce
- 2 Tbsp honey
- 2 Tbsp sriracha
- 3 Tbsp water
- 4 salmon filets
- 2 tsp sesame seeds

Directions
1. Preheat the oven to 425 F.
2. In a small bowl whisk together the marinade ingredients.
3. Place the salmon filets on a rimmed baking sheet.
4. Spoon the marinade on top of the salmon and bake it for 15 minutes.
5. Serve with rice and greens and a sprinkling of sesame seeds.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Business bigwigs
7. Scand. land
10. 'N' in #15-Across' answer, briefly
14. Turkey's capital
15. Winnipeg Jets org.
16. Female 'friend' in France
17. Wearing very high-heeled shoes, say
19. Health club class
20. Diner beverage
21. Two-masted boat
22. Seize power
23. "Body's in Trouble" by Canadian singer/songwriter __ O'Hara
26. Perform like Magic Mike
29. "Only the __" by Roy Orbison
30. Canuck motorists org.
31. Leaky ink shape
33. Mitsou's message for her Cowboy: 2 wds.
37. Takes __ (Swims)
39. "And in the morning when __..." - Loggins & Messina
41. Chess piece
42. "The Blue __" by Johann Strauss Jr.
44. Be without
46. Pres. Eisenhower
47. On your marks, __ ...Go!
49. Stranded, castaway-style
51. Items obtained through hunting used to adorn traditional Inuit clothing: 2 wds.
55. Flexible
56. Spawned
57. Epochs
61. Sort of streambed
62. Can function independently - no accessories required
64. Actress Ms. Arden's
65. Nero's 151
66. Say "I'd like you to come."
67. Skin-care products suffix
68. Underworld goddess of Norse mythology
69. Lashed lieu

DOWN
1. Low music pitch
2. Not tricked: 2 wds.
3. Become traction-less
4. Deli selection
5. Prior, previously
6. Ancient companion for Dionysus
7. Trans-Canadian __ __ (Recreational traveller's winter route)
8. Jill of "The Love Boat"
9. Antiquity
10. One of the opinion that it can't be done
11. French Canadian singer, France D'__
12. Striped big cat ...mais en francais
13. Jumped
18. Songstress Ms. Swift
22. The __ Duckling
24. Police alert, commonly
25. Medieval bowed instrument
26. Large amount
27. "Presto!"
28. Particular precipitation
32. Eurythmics' "Would I __ __ You?"
34. Seethe
35. Oxen harness
36. Just managed, __ out
38. Boxing
40. Lustrous fabric
43. Lilith's portrayer on "Cheers"
45. Sewing collection
48. Nuanced
50. Delay or cancel
51. Made noise, crow-style
52. Plant source of tequila
53. Canadian band, Red __
54. "__ and the Cruisers" (1983) starring Tom Berenger
58. Churn
59. Not in favour
60. Plant's origin
62. Educ. institution
63. Whichever

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
If you think you cannot lose then you're halfway toward winning. A positive mental attitude is a must as you have so many things to do. You can never be optimistic enough.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Fortune will smile on you this week, especially if you think and act quickly. Your enthusiasm will impress people and increase the odds that you'll get a good offer. Self-belief plus hard work equals success.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You'll be a bit emotional today but that may be no bad thing. Some people think they can let you down and get away with it. Remind them actions have consequences.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You've realized that a certain person is no good for you, now let them know that your association is done. Don't worry about hurting their feelings — it's your feelings that matter.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
There'll be a lot of noise this week and you'll wish you could switch off the world. That isn't going to happen so invest in a good pair of headphones. Tune out the negativity.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You may be inclined to let false accusations about you pass but the planets warn if you do your reputation will suffer. Don't let anyone say bad things about you without an instant response. Stand up for yourself.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Before the end of the month you must get both your family and financial houses in order. What you change now will determine how much fun you have later.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Something will occur today that angers you a bit but don't let your feelings get out of control. And before you make any kind of accusations make sure that the facts are correct.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Follow your heart over the next few days or you could miss out. Where relationships are concerned, be more open and honest about how you feel. Don't be suspicious of passion, least of all your own.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Every word a certain individual says seems to rub you up the wrong way. Either stay away from them or let them know that they need to keep silent around you. The time for pleasantries is over.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
A friend is going through a hard time and you want to help them. Your best course of action is to keep your distance. Give them space to work things out for themselves.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
Mix business with pleasure, but be careful the pleasure part of the equation does not take over completely. Get your work done first, then reward yourself with a night on the town.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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					6		8	
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Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers.

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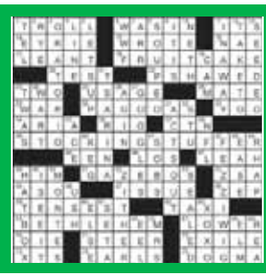

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